Mr. Charles Kuhn, librarian
Hood College
Frederick, Md. 21701

11/20/89

Dear Charles,

You may remember that Martha Church was quite interested in doing some oral histories. Nobody has had time for them. I was reminded of this again in reading "Blowback," which I borrowed from Jerry McKnight. I enclose a copy of the cover, which describes the content well. It deals with our recruitment of Nazis and the consequences. As far as I've gone it seems to me to be an important work.

I do not know whether you have it in the library or whether it is or will be of interest to either students or faculty. Or whether what I say below will.

Among the many Nazis brought here were some really terrible people, guilty of the most heinous war crimes. Our Army in particular wanted to have them here and working for it and the government in areas of their specialization and knowledge, for all practical purposes their knowledge and connections that could be used against the USSR.

A review procedure was established and soon was bypassed because so many could not meet the requirements. The Pentagon established a Joint Intelligence Objectives Agency to handle it and those they recommended had to be approved by other agencies, like State and Justice. JIOA's director was Bosquet Wev (right). The names, which came from OMGUS, Office of Military Government, U.S., in Germany, made the initial recommendations and Wev shepherded them through to approval. Relating to this, the book states (36):

"Unfortunately for Wev, however, the State Department's representative on the committee was Samuel Klaus, a stickler for detail who made no secret of his belief that Nazis -"ex-" or otherwise, were a threat to the United States."

Klaus is referred to on the next ~~page~~ two pages and not otherwise described. He was, if I remember correctly, in charge of State intelligence. Apparently the author got none of his records from State in the efforts he made under FOIA to get them.

The time is about 1946. I was then in OSS, which had not yet been terminated. When that happened Research and Analysis, in which I was, was transferred to State. Klaus, of whom I'd never heard, phoned and asked me to come see him.

Beginning with my first assignment in OSS I was used from time to time as a trouble-shooter. I think this was in part from the results of the investigation of me made while I was a soldier, beginning before I was discharged from Walter Reed Hospital, and in part from the reputation I'd made in my investigative reporting, mostly on Nazi cartels.

I do not know how Klaus learned what I knew that was of interest to him but I do recall what that was. I regret very much that the author did not have that information for this book because it adds, I think, to the history he has written about "the disastrous effect on our domestic and foreign policy" of this large-scale recruitment of Nazis who not infrequently were really war criminals, guilty of crimes against humanity.

When the "azis finally surrendered, captured documents poured into Washington. The appropriate components of the various agencies received copies. In my branch this was referred to as "outpost" work and I handled it. Nazi and Italian documents were both included. Also included were copies of memoranda and reports made by our own people.

The "azis made real efforts to hide records when defeat was apparent, some with the intent of using them for their own purposes, like General Gehlen, who gets much space in this book. I still remember where some were found, not by any means all of which I knew. For example, foreign-office records were hidden in a salt mine near Marburg, and that was a real find. (Of which, to the best of my knowledge, not much use was ever made.)

What interested Klaus in particular and what he asked me about immediately and I could refer him to it was a report or reports that our army had destroyed a valuable cache of Nazi Party or Gestapo (or both) records too large to be moved rapidly so that the USSR would not possess and be able to use them. I was, of course, stunned that this had been done and that as a result some of the worst criminals in mankind's history would be immune. My present recollection is that all those records were just dumped and burned to keep the Soviets from having them. We had captured them in what was to be the Soviet zone and would be leaving it as soon as their forces reached it.

Of the other things I remember from those documents that passed through my hands I meantion two that may be of interest at some point.

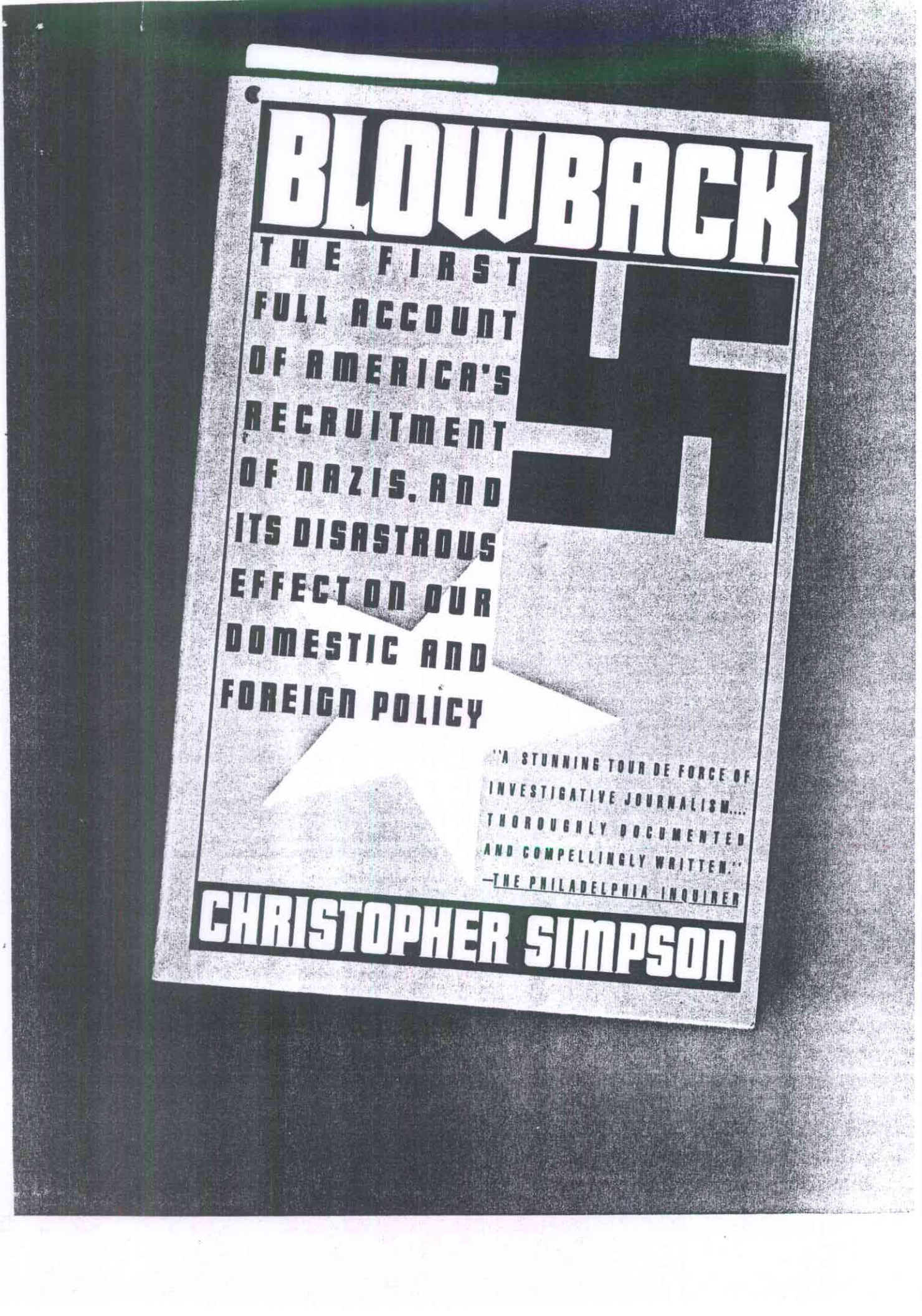
The Italian ambassador to Nicaragua wrote a personal letter to Mussolini at the request of the founding Samoza. The thrust was that Samoza had expressed the hope that Mussolini could find time to write and tell him how to do what Musso had done, the Italian way. I've never heard that State had disclosed the document reflecting Samoza's desire to make Nicaragua into a fascist state.

Baron von Weisaecker, father of the present (I think) foreign minister of the West German government and Reagan's host at Bitburg, was Hitler's ambassador to the Vatican, to Rome, or both. He reported regularly on his contacts with the pope and I interpreted what he reported about himself as reflecting looking out for himself with the pope after the end of that war. That pope did many things regarded as pro-Nazi and under him the Vatican helped many war criminals escape.

Also relating to our military: when Musso was captured by the partisans he had about 25 suitcases, some full of records, including his own holdings. They turned them over to our military, which microfilmed them. I have no recollection, if I ever knew, what happened to the originals. I traced the microfilm to the Pentagon, where all record of them allegedly disappeared. A Frenchman, Jean Pajus, an economist working for one of the war agencies, duplicated this with the same results.

It was not long before US corporations were moving in on Italian corporations. Of the records I saw I remember our Henry Kaiser people and Snia Viscosa and Pirelli tires.

Best, Harold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